NUMB. CLVIII.

The SPECTATOR.

—Genius natale comes qui Temperat aſtrum
Naturæ Deus Humanæ Mortalis in unum
Quodque caput — Hor.

Thurſday, Auguſt 30. 1711.

I am very much at a Loſs to expreſs by any Word that occurs to me in our Language that Thing which is underſtood by *Indoles* in Latin. The natural Diſpoſition to any particular Art, Science, Profeſſion, or Trade, is very much to be conſidered in the Care of Youth, and ſtudied by Parents for their own Conduct when they form to themſelves any Scheme of Life. It is wonderfully hard indeed for a Man to judge of his own Capacity impartially; that may look great to me which may appear little to another, and I may be carried by Weakneſs towards my ſelf ſo far, as to attempt Things too high for my Talents and Accompliſhments: But it is not methinks ſo very difficult a Matter to make a Judgment of the Abilities of other, eſpecially of thoſe who are in their Infancy. My common-place Book directs me on this Occaſion to mention the Dawning of Greatneſs in *Alexander*, who being aſked in his Youth to contend for a Prize in the Olympick Games, anſwered he would if he had Kings to run againſt him. *Caſſius*, who was one of the Conſpirators againſt *Ceſar*, gave as great a Proof of his Temper, when in his Childhood he ſtruck a Play-fellow, the Son of *Sylla*, for ſaying his Father was Maſter of the *Roman* People. *Scipio* is reported to have diſcovered, (when ſome Flatterers at Supper were naming him what the *Romans* ſhould do for a General after his Death) Take *Marius*. *Marius* was then a very Boy, and had given no Inſtances of his Valour; but it was viſible to *Scipio* from the Manners of the Youth, that he had a Soul formed for the Attempt and Execution of great Undertakings. I muſt confeſs I have very often with much Sorrow bewailed the Misfortune of the Children of *Great Britain*, when I conſider the Ignorance and Undiſcerning of the Generality of Schoolmaſters. The boaſted Liberty we talk of is but a mean Reward for the long Servitude, the many Heart-Aches and Terrours to which our Childhood is expoſed in going through a Grammar-ſchool: Many of theſe ſtupid Tyrants exerciſe their Cruelty without any Manner of Diſtinction of the Capacities of Children, or the Intention of Parents in their Behalf. There are many excellent Tempers which are worthy to be nouriſhed and cultivated with all poſſible Diligence and Care, that were never deſigned to be acquainted with *Ariſtotle*, *Tully*, or *Virgil*; and there are as many who have Capacities for underſtanding every Word thoſe great Perſons have writ, and yet were not born to have any Reliſh of their Writings. For want of this common and obvious diſcerning in thoſe who have the Care of Youth, we have ſo many Hundred unaccountable Creatures every Age whipped up into great Scholars, that are for ever near a right Underſtanding, and will never arrive at it. Theſe are the Scandal of Letters, and theſe are generally the Men who are to teach others. The Senſe of Shame and Honour is enough to keep the World it ſelf in Order without corporal Puniſhment, much more to train the Minds of uncorrupted and innocent Children. It happens, I doubt not, more than once in a Year, that a Lad is chaſtiſed for a Blockhead, when it is good Apprehenſion that makes him incapable of knowing what his Teacher means: A briſk Imagination very often may ſuggeſt an Errour, which a Lad could not have fallen into if he had been as heavy in conjecturing as his Maſter in explaining: But there is no Mercy even towards a wrong Interpretation of his Meaning, the Sufferings of the Scholar's Body are to rectify the Miſtakes of his Mind.

I am confident that no Boy who will not be allured to Letters without Blows, will ever be brought to any thing with them. A great or good Mind muſt neceſſarily be the worſe for ſuch Indignities; and it is a ſad Change to loſe of its Virtue for the Improvement of its Knowledge. No one who has gone through what they call a great School, but muſt remember to have ſeen Children

of

of excellent and ingenuous Natures, (as has afterwards appeared in their Manhood;) I say no Man has passed through this Way of Education, but must have seen an ingenuous Creature expiring with Shame, with pale Looks, beseeching Sorrow, and silent Tears throw up its honest Eyes, and kneel on its tender Knees to an inexorable Blockhead, to be forgiven the false Quantity of a Word in making a Latin Verse: The Child is punished, and the next Day he commits a like Crime, and so a third with the same Consequence. I would fain ask any reasonable Man whether this Lad, in the Simplicity of his native Innocence, full of Shame, and capable of any Impression from that Grace of Soul, was not fitter for any Purpose in this Life, than after that Spark of Virtue is extinguished in him, tho' he is able to write twenty Verses in an Evening?

Seneca says, after his exalted Way of talking, *As the immortal Gods never learnt any Virtue, tho' they are endued with all that is good; so there are some Men who have so natural a Propensity to what they should follow, that they learn it almost as soon as they hear it.* Plants and Vegetables are cultivated into the Production of finer Fruit than they would yield without that Care; and yet we cannot entertain Hopes of producing a tender conscious Spirit into Acts of Virtue without the same Methods as is used to cut Timber, or give new Shape to a Piece of Stone.

It is wholly to this dreadful Practice that we may attribute a certain Hardness and Ferocity which some Men, tho' liberally educated, carry about them in all their Behaviour. To be bred like a Gentleman, and punished like a Malefactor, must, as we see it does, produce that illiberal Sauciness which we see sometimes in Men of Letters.

The *Spartan* Boy who suffered the Fox (which he had stolen and hid under his Coat) to eat into his Bowels, I dare say had not half the Wit or Petulance which we learn at great Schools among us: But the glorious Sense of Honour, or rather Fear of Shame, which he demonstrated in that Action, was worth all the Learning in the World without it.

It is methinks a very melancholy Consideration, that a little Negligence can spoil us, but great Industry is necessary to improve us; the most excellent Natures are soon depreciated, but evil Tempers are long before they are exalted into good Habits. To help this by Punishments, is the same thing as killing a Man to cure him of a Distemper; when he comes to suffer Punishment in that one Circumstance, he is brought below the Existence of a rational Creature, and is in the State of a Brute that moves only by the Admonition of Stripes. But since this Custom of educating by the Lash is suffered by the Gentry of *Great Britain*, I would prevail only that honest heavy Lads may be dismissed from Slavery sooner than they are at present, and not whipped on to their fourteenth or fifteenth Year whether they expect any Progress from them or not. Let the Child's Capacity be forthwith examined, and sent to some mechanick Way of Life, without Respect to his Birth, if Nature designed him for nothing higher; let him go before he has innocently suffered, and is debased into a Dereliction of Mind for being what it is no Guilt to be, a plain Man. I would not here be supposed to have said, that our learned Men of either Robe who have been whipped at School are not still Men of noble and liberal Minds, but I am sure they had been much more so than they are had they never suffered that Infamy.

But tho' there is so little Care, as I have observed, taken, or Observation made of the natural Strain of Men, it is no small Comfort to me, as a SPECTATOR, that there is any right Value set upon the bona *Indoles* of other Animals; as appears by the following Advertisement handed about the County of *Lincoln*, and subscribed by *Enos Thomas*, a Person whom I have not the Honour to know, but supposed to be profoundly learned in Horse-flesh.

A Chesnut Horse called Cæsar, *bred by* James Darcey, *Esq; at* Sedbury *near* Richmond *in the County of* York; *his Grandam was his old royal Mare, and got by* Blunderbuss, *which was got by* Hemsly Turk, *and got by Mr.* Courand's Arabian, *which got Mr.* Mashul's Jewstrump. *Mr.* Cæsar *sold him to a Noble-man (coming five Years old, when he had but one Sweat) for three hundred Guineas. A Guinea a Leap and Tribe and a Shilling the Man.* Enos Thomas

ADVERTISEMENTS.

For SALE by the CANDLE.

On Thursday the 6th of September next, at Garraway's Coffee-house in Exchange-Ally in Cornhill, at to be Noon, (only one Cask and Basket in a Lot) the intire Cargo neutral Ship the Emanuel, Biorn Bengson Master, imported Dieppe, (pursuant to an Act of Parliament made last Session) ing of excellent new French Wines, neat, viz. 44 Feuillettes or Hogsheads of Burgundy, 4 Baskets containing each 100 Champaign, and 66 Hogsheads of true Hermitage, just landed, now in a Vault near the House of Mr. Tho. Cary, Merchant, in tolph lane near Billingsgate: The said Wines are to be seen and ed on Tuesday the 4th and Wednesday the 5th of September said. Note, The Buyers are desired to appear punctually at the appointed, determining to compleat the Sale without adjour To be sold by Tho. Tomkins, Broker.

The Right Honourable the late Lord Brook's Houshold Goods, in, and belonging to his Lordship's House in T kenham near Brentford, in the County of Middlesex; consisting fine Beds and Bedding, Indian Cabinets, Looking-Glasses, Tables, Chairs, Tapistry Hangings, fine old Chink-Ware, Pictures, Pewter, Brass, and all sorts of Kitchin-Ware, will be by Auction at the said House on Monday the 3d of September The Goods, &c. to be seen to Morrow, and Saturday before Sale. The Sale to begin at Ten in the Morning, and to continue till all are sold.

This Day is Publish'd,

A Speech for D---ffe Younger of Arnistown, he should be impeach'd of H--h T---n for what he said and did bout the Pretender's Medal lately sent to the Faculty of Advocates at Edinburgh. Printed for J. Baker in Pater-noster-Row. Price 6d.

Just Publish'd,

The Political State of Great-Britain for July 1711. Price 1 s. Printed for J. Baker in Pater-noster-row: where may be had the six preceding Months bound with a fine Frontispiece, or single. The Eleven Opinions about Mr. H--y; and a Re-representation, being a modest Enquiry after the Great Patriots of the Nation. Price 1 s. each. The Laity's Remonstrance Price 6 d.

The most celebrated Elixir Salutis, commonly call'd Daffy's Elixir, being of a wonderful Virtue, highly approved on by most eminent Physitians, is sold at the two Green Posts Dean-street in Fetter-lane, at 2 s. the half Pint Bottle, or half Bottle at 1 s. with Directions: And where is also sold the best Coffee, fine Green and Bohee-Tea, and Chocolate fine ground at lowest Rates.

LONDON: Printed for *Sam. Buckley*, at the *Dolphin* in *Little-Britain*; and Sold by *A. Baldwin* in *Warwick-Lane*; where Advertisements are taken in as also by *Charles Lillie*, Perfumer, at the Corner of *Beauford-Buildings* in the *Strand*.